Lemnitzer

Sprague

8/21/72

Dear Dick,

You have made my day! Please don't underrate this accomplishment, for we have had few days of late not easy to make or remake.

In today's mail a thoughtful friend's copy of your August Computers' piece was included. It is in no sense inferior to your earlier Computers' writing, nor is it in any sense a reduction in Bentley's standards.

Now for the first time there is any explanation for the purposes of the bugging. Of course, I'm still ridden by doubts about why 5 or 9 or 10 or 11 or an almost infinite number of men were needed for the planting of a bug or bugs. I guess I live in the antediluvian past, in which it took but one man, so much modernity is beyond my probably limited comprehension. Here you don't help. In fact, as I recall, here you also don't address.

Too bad. With the unique genius you display elsewhere, you might have solved this one.

And as had you thought of it, I'm sure you'd have been able to enlighten me on another troubling score, why $89,000, provided in typical CIA fashion, as I recall (I sup-ose the distinction is with typical Republican fashion?) was needed for the planting of a bug or bugs. I don't think it is really material to get you lost some $25,000, and that the actual total to date admitted is $114,000, for the principle would be the same, wouldn't it? And the typicality.

No criticism. Allowance must be made for the urgent need of getting the given word to the people as fast as possible. If this extracts its cost, is it not worth the need?

That the traceable equipment was licensed to the Republicans, not the CIA, is irrelevant anyway because they are, as I sup-ose you just didn't have room to say, one and the same and there the CIA just used the various Republican committee, Mitchell (and Martha-you forgot her), Stans, Liddy and a few others as their cover. So is it irrelevant that the frequencies allotted to the transceivers were Republican, not CIA frequencies, because the CIA uses whose frequencies it will, including the Republicans'. And the need for transceivers in plant a bug(s)? You had time pressures or space problems, so I sup-ose, you just couldn't tell us they were needed to keep in touch with those CIA cookers, not Republicans or any ilk, water, level or function.

There is so much I didn't understand that now is clear. Like can't leaving the country the very second day. You didn't tell us, but I can now see clearly this was but another CIA device, a kind of bribery, by which junkets at taxpayers' expense were provided for the FBI agents who interviewed him and the grand jury that questioned him. They think of everything, those CIAns!

And how Hunt got to be one of the top officials? Not until you made me think did I come to understand this. By resigning, of course, two years ago. What a perfect cover to hide him from the table of organization! If I'd thought of Bentley, I might have figured this out sooner. But I can see it now, clear as only you could make it.

You did kind of slip a bit, omitting the one admitted CIA connection; that the p.r. agency for which Hunt worked when he wasn't sneaking into the White House for the CIA, really had the CIA as a client, through Radio Free Cuba.

As I guess I never realized that the reason those cats were arrested at Lake Ponchartrain is because they were CIA. The FBI and local gestapos always arrest the CIA, don't they? And confiscate their arms, etc.

But the part that really blew my mind (do I use the phrase correctly? There is so much to which I'm not really hep) is the reason for this caper. You could have spelled it out a bit more, but you are explicit enough. We had to be bugged to know where the Democratic were because the papers can't be trusted; because all that crowd-gathering for the candidates is only more CIA tomfoolery, so the announcements can't be trusted; because the posted notices of any caucuses can always be counterfeited by the CIA; because Larry O'Brien handled all such details. In short, because there simply was no other way to know. One could n't be able to depend on anything except eavesdropping to know in advance where McGovern or whoever would be so they could be knocked off. I was just a bit perplexed at why this wouldn't require bugging McGovern, but I finally decided you just had all these limitations and couldn't tell us: The CIA did that, too, as a sort of second-line, but that did that invisibly (as in Invisible Government) and thus haven't been caught. Great stuff, Dick, up to your very best. We are all in your debt, especially the Republicans. Strange!